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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 002997

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR P, EUR/SCE, EUR/ERA, EUR/WE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [BK](#) [IT](#) [PRELB](#) [EUNJ](#)

SUBJECT: BOSNIA: ITALY TO PUSH MIRACHIAN CANDIDACY FOR OHR
ON MARGINS OF UNGA; BELIEVES DUTCH CANDIDATE UNSUITABLE

REF: ROME 1966

Classified By: CLASSIFIED BY DCM ANNA BORG, REASONS 1.4 B AND D.

11. (C) In DCM's introductory call on Italian MFA Political Director Terzi, Terzi made a strong pitch for the U.S. to support senior Italian diplomat Laura Mirachian to replace Paddy Ashdown as High Rep in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Terzi said the Italians learned on Sept. 8 that The Netherlands was proposing Ashdown be replaced by a former Dutch NATO PermRep who had also had a career as a politician. Terzi complained that the Dutch individual, whom he did not name, was not well known in Europe and had no direct Balkan experience.

12. (C) Terzi underscored that Mirachian (a former Amb. to Syria and DAS-equivalent for the Balkans) was well-known and respected at high levels in all European capitals and argued that no Italian has yet held a senior international position in the Balkans. This, he continued, was the case despite Italian vital interests being at stake in the Balkans due to Italy's proximity, and despite Italy making a significant contribution to Balkan development, security and stability. He mentioned immigration, smuggling and the drug trade as areas where Balkan developments directly impact Italy, and reminded us that with 4,000 troops in the region, Italy is today the largest European troop contributor to peacekeeping missions in the Balkans.

13. (C) The low-key Terzi became animated when he raised Marichian's candidacy, and said that FM Fini and other senior Italian officials were taking the challenge of a Dutch candidate, who the Italians consider unsuitable as a serious problem. He suggested this was likely to come up during Italian meetings with U.S. officials on the margins of the UNGA next week.
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